

**DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

744 P Street, Sacramento, CA 95814



October 23, 2003

**RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS REGARDING RFP 03-02  
CHILD WELFARE SERVICES  
EVIDENCE BASED PRACTICE CLEARINGHOUSE**

The following is California Department of Social Services (CDSS), Office of Child Abuse Prevention's response to the questions received on or before October 10, 2003 pertaining to RFP03-02, Child Welfare Services Evidence based Practice Clearinghouse. Related questions have been grouped and answered accordingly. This document is being sent to parties that submitted questions and is being posted on the CDSS web page at [www.dss.cahwnet.gov](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov). Go to "Quick Links", click on Clearinghouse Questions (RFP03-02).

**Question:**

- 1) We here at the University of Utah College of Social Work are interested whether you would consider proposals from out of state organizations? We may be interested in submitting a proposal but wonder if California has a predilection for using in-state providers?
- 2) As a national non-profit organization based in Washington, DC, is the Child Welfare League of America eligible to apply for this grant?
- 3) Does the Agency prefer to receive grant applications from CA-based organizations?

**Response:**

**CDSS is accepting applications from all eligible entities (see page 8 of the RFP) including those located out of California.**

**Question:**

- 4) Should best-practices for the State of California be pulled from research throughout the country or mostly examples from within the State of California?

**Response:**

**CDSS expects the Clearinghouse to contain practices derived from state, national and international experiences.**

**Question:**

- 5) a. Is the majority of the work expected to be completed in the State of California or can necessary travel to California be built into the grant?
- b. Will the major staff on this grant be able to travel out of state to conferences on Evidence Based Practice and can funds be included in the budget for that travel? Most of the information on Evidence Based Practice is presented at out of state conferences.

**Response:**

**It is expected that some of the work to be completed will be done in California. Travel that is necessary for the development, design and implementation of the Clearinghouse should be included in the budget and described in the budget narrative submitted by the bidder. At this time, the State of California is not approving travel expenses related to conference attendance.**

**Question:**

- 6) a. The RFP discusses an *Advisory Group* with which the grantee must collaborate (pages 9 and 11) and provides membership guidelines (page 11). Is *Advisory Group* membership limited to California residents/professionals, or would it be acceptable for any of the Group to include researchers or collateral professionals who live and/or practice in other states?
- b. Will committee meetings be held or will primary communication be Electronically and/or conference calls?
- c. What is the extent of the advisory committee's charge (i.e., identifying topics, recommending research reviews to approving those items to be included, application recommendations)?

**Response:**

**The Advisory Group may include researchers and collateral professionals who reside both in California and outside of California. The Advisory Group will determine the most effective means for initial and ongoing communications and may include meetings, electronic communications and conference calls.**

**The Advisory Group's charge is as set forth in the RFP.**

**Question:**

- 7) Goal 2 (page 11) discusses "...A conceptual framework design for an interactive web based application." Can you elaborate on the:
- a. scope of the conceptual framework
  - b. distinction between framework design and technical development.
  - c. tasks under the framework design and technical development

**Response:**

**It is California Departments of Social Services' expectation that the various proposals will elaborate upon the conceptual framework design. Please refer to goal #2 in the RFP.**

**Question:**

- 8) Will you be giving preference to CA based organizations, female, disabled veteran, or minority--owned businesses?

**Response:**

**No.**

**Question:**

- 9) Are these statements accurate interpretations of the goals:

Goal #1: In consultation with a small advisory group, develop, implement, and welfare staff throughout California.

Goal #2: Develop "conceptual framework design" for EBC (i.e., describe how it would be structured, what features it would include, how it would be updated, maintained, etc.).

**Response:**

**The goals are set forth on page 10 of the RFP.**

**Question:**

- 10) If all things are equal and there is a tie on proposal score, what will be the deciding factor, budget, California base, previous work experience in California, other?

**Response:**

**Each proposal will be read and scored by two or more independent readers. Proposals will be ranked by the combined score of reviewers. As numerous sections need to be scored, the probability of a tie is unlikely. Should there be a tie score, this will be broken by a fair and random process.**

**Question:**

- 11) Are there currently available criteria for assessing evidence based practice? Can you provide some current examples of evidence base practice in use in California?

**Response:**

**One role of the Advisory Group is to determine the criteria for evidence based practices that will be included in the Clearinghouse. The burden is on the bidder to identify any current examples of Evidence based Practices particularly those related to child welfare services in California.**

**Question:**

- 12) Please provide the names of the organizations/entities that submitted questions.

**Response:**

**CDSS does not release the names of the organizations or entities that submitted questions.**

**Question:**

- 13) At the top of Exhibit D, the proposal rating matrix, it says that the maximum points are 225 but we can find only 160 (40 x 4) points. Which is correct? If 225 points is correct, where/how are the additional points allocated?

**Response:**

**The correct amount is 225 points. There are a maximum of 40 points per each of the four (4) sections for a total of 160 points; the technical review consist of an additional 65 point.**

**Question:**

- 14 Is this intended solely as a web-based clearinghouse, or is the contractor required to provide hard copies? If hard copies are required, how many copies of each document should the contractor anticipate?

**Response:**

**It is our intent that the Clearinghouse will be web based. It is recommended that the bidder include some printing cost in the proposed budget related to advisory group activities and reporting to the State.**

**Question:**

- 15) On page 8, section E, it states the purpose of the RFP is to “develop, implement and maintain an evidence based clearinghouse...” but on page 10, point 3 says “Prepare recommendations for the characteristics, structure and features necessary to place the Clearinghouse on the web....” Will the contractor actually be operating the Clearinghouse during the 36-month grant period?

**Response:**

**The selected bidder will be responsible for development and design of the Clearinghouse and is expected to work in conjunction with the bidder that is selected for the web site construction and implementation which will be released under another RFP.**

**Question:**

- 16) a. Where text is required to be "double spaced," may information and data in tables and charts be single-spaced for easier reading?
- b. Should the page numbering begin with the proposal cover as page 1 and continue consecutively through all other sections?

**Response:**

**Text is required to be doubled spaced, however, information and data in tables and charts may be singled spaced.**

**Page numbering should begin with the proposed cover as page 1 and continue consecutively through all other sections.**

**Question:**

- 17) Who will decide the composition of the advisory committee?

**Response:**

**The successful bidder will propose advisory group members and the State will approve advisory group membership. The State will provide technical assistance to the successful bidder for identifying and recruiting advisory group members.**

**Question:**

- 18) The university has an agreed upon indirect rate with the state of California. Which indirect rate will be applied?

**Response:**

**Please refer to RFP 03-02 Budget Guidelines page 36 "Indirect Costs."**

**Question:**

- 19) Where should the discussion of staff qualifications appear? Do you want resumes/vitas of named key staff included as an attachment or in an appendix to the application?

**Response:**

**Staff qualifications can be discussed under Section C. Information on Bidder; key staff information such as resumes/vitas may be included in the appendix to the application.**

**Question:**

- 20) On page 8 it says: "A successful bidder for this RFP is expected to be knowledgeable about child welfare services practiced in California; have a deep understanding of current trends in evidence based practice and research; have experience in developing, convening and working with a knowledgeable advisory group; and have general experience and knowledge about effective Clearinghouse design. Bidders must submit evidence of a minimum of **combined experience of fifteen (15) years of responsible activities and expertise in the above areas.**" On page 45, Exhibit D, column 1, it says: "Bidder exceeds minimum **required 15 combined years experience in research** (California and nationally) with a focus on child welfare practice and reform." Which description is correct?

**Response:**

**Both are consistent. The expectation is that the successful bidder will meet or exceed the combined 15 years of experience that primarily reflects child welfare practice and reform.**

**Question:**

- 21) Please clarify the phrase on page 47, Exhibit D, column 1: "Clearinghouse exceeds CDSS implementation including literature, research, evaluation, tools, methods, curricula, funding source, statutes and regulations; workload implications, community organization approaches, resource development strategies, costs, program guides, protocols and procedures for ongoing additions and maintenance of Clearinghouse." Are there written CDSS clearinghouse standards or guidelines for implementation or does this refer to something else?

**Response:**

**This phrase refers to the expectations as expressed in the RFP.**

**Question:**

- 22) Are all of the items listed part of the same area for discussion OR are the items *after* "statutes and regulations;" (semi-colon) and beginning with "workload implications," a separate area for discussion?

**Response:**

**Due to a printing error, the semi-colon should be a comma. This refers to the expectations as indicated on page 8 "Purpose of RFP".**

**Question:**

- 23) On page 47, Exhibit D, column 1: "Clearinghouse exceeds CDSS implementation including literature, research, evaluation, tools, methods, curricula, funding source, statutes and regulations; workload implications, community organization approaches, resource development strategies, costs, program guides, protocols and procedures for ongoing additions and maintenance of Clearinghouse." Do the items listed refer to the operation and maintenance of the Clearinghouse or to the Evidence Based Practices that would be featured by the Clearinghouse?

**Response:**

**The items listed refer to the example the bidder may provide to describe bidder's experience in designing and maintaining a Clearinghouse. The list is intended to provide a means for measuring bidder's knowledge and experience of operating and maintaining a Clearinghouse.**